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Magic moments

It's that time of year when anything can happen. Besides Santa and his elves, other magical personages come to life. At Salle Wilfrid-Pelletier, Place des Arts, the genies of the lamp and of the ring, the lovely princess, Aladdin and his whole entourage will step out of the pages of the Thousand and One Arabian Nights to entertain children at a special matinee Saturday. Aladdin is presented by The Gingerbread Players & Jack from New York.

Want a harpsichord? Buy a kit

Music Notes

By Jacob Siskind

Did you know that you can make anything, or almost everything, by ordering do-it-yourself kits through the mail?

Well, even if you did, you were probably not aware of the enormous range of kits actually available to the ordinary Joe who can putter around with a screw-driver, a soldering iron and a hammer.

Jeffrey Feinman has rectified that situation. In one volume, appropriately called The Catalog of Kits, he has details on where and how to get kits to build almost everything. And he also warns you how much it is likely to cost.

If you want to build a Dulcimer, a harpsichord, a violin, clavichord, piano music box, electric organ, harp, hurdy-gurdy, psaltery, limerjack or guitar — there's a company somewhere that makes a kit. The Catalog lists the addresses of firms that supply the parts and the instructions.

And if you want to build your own home, dome, furniture, decoys, camping equipment, boats, electronic equipment and models, they're there too.

If you have always yearned to fly, there is a Benson Gyrocopter for a mere $2,400; or a Bede Aircraft BD-4 single engine, two-seater plane for less than $4,000 (less engine of course).

Have you been looking for a home security system? Several have been listed in this incredible book.

For the ladies there are the needlecraft and jewelry kits and there are all the other crafts — like leather, sand-painting, stone-rubbing, candle-making, tapestry and rug kits.

Get the kit book now and plan ways to fill those idle moments during your vacation next summer.

All you need is a little money and a lot of patience and perseverance.

That Flemish harpsichord for less than $600 is really tempting!

The book is published in Canada by George J. McLeod, Ltd., and sells for $7.95. What an inexpensive way to trigger a host of dreams!

* * *

It has been some time since **Maurice Béjart's Ballet du XXe Siecle** has been to Montreal, but ballet enthusiasts have not forgotten the impact this company made when it first came here during Expo 67.

Originally scheduled to give two performances next week in the Theatre Maisonneuve, demand for tickets has necessitated the addition of a third performance.

However, the company's schedule has made it necessary to have the extra event precede the two others. On Sunday evening the Béjart company will present two works not seen on its other performances — Farah and Il rest le mort.

Farah is interesting because it uses Iranian folk music and is made up of 12 individual dances, each using two dancers. The character of each dance has been carefully prepared to contrast with those it follows and precedes.

The other ballet uses the Four Last Songs by Richard Strauss as its musical background.

The one ballet in common to all three evenings is Stravinsky's Oiseau de Feu, which has been seen here as performed by Les Grands Ballets Canadiens but which the Béjart company has never before presented in Montreal.

Company hedges on film 'murders'

by FRANCES TAYLOR
Newhouse News Service

NEW YORK — A movie called Snuff is about to be shown in a number of theatres around America. It is scheduled to premiere in Indianapolis next month, then move on to New York, Los Angeles and other major U.S. cities.

Admission will cost $7.50, says Variety, the weekly news magazine of show business.

For months now, there's been a rumor in New York film circles that this film shows actual murders, on camera, of several young women.

From the U.S. distributor, Monarch Releasing Corp., I received the following statement:

"Monarch Releasing Corp. has announced the acquisition of worldwide distribution rights to 'Snuff,' a controversial film said to depict in graphic terms the slaughter of four young actresses on camera.

"Filmed in South America under utmost secrecy, 'Snuff' has already sparked heated protest from several so-called 'decency groups' who allege that the film's highly violent nature could 'seriously subvert the nation's moral standards.'

"In light of these attacks the producers of 'Snuff' have assured exhibitors that all obstacles which stood in the way of the film's release have been removed."

Prepared ads for the film declare it could have been made "only in South America where life is cheap."

Nowhere do Monarch's statement and ad confirm the grisly rumors. But they also carefully avoid denying them.

If Snuff succeeds because of the rumor of actual killing on camera, what will the movie's makers do for an encore?

Trio's solid support

Jesse adds new dimensions

By JUAN RODRIGUEZ
for The Gazette

Jesse Winchester is introducing his new electric sound in town this week, at the Hotel Nelson's Evechè Club, in a show that is revealing new dimensions in the singer-songwriter's performing style.

Winchester's writing has a fine austere simplicity about it, something he's never wanted to tamper with; thus, local audiences have rarely seen him away from grappling solo with acoustic guitar.

Now he has gathered together three sidemen who not only support him solidly but have also found themselves tackling more subtle sides of their musical development.

While Winchester is jangling moonglows on electric piano or striking out curiously funky rhythm riffs on electric guitar, his trio adds deft touches to make the sound more complete and responsive to the performance of the songs themselves.

JESSE WINCHESTER
. . . austere simplicity

There are the booming and very stylish bass tones of Marty Harris (who has previously played with Randy Bishop and Anne Andersen); the crafty contrast between cymbals and skins by drummer Chris Castle (who backed up Diane Dufresne and Aut'Chose among others); and the clear lickety-split guitar picking of Bob Cohen (late of Tony Roman and Long John Baldry).

The kind of rock 'n' roll Winchester demands of them has a deceptive laid-back quality, despite the singer's tense vocal concentration. His sound is a perhaps unwitting blend of country and jazz approaches, the kind of music rarely heard in the mainstream pop scene.

The band setting gives the singer time to stretch out and build atmosphere, such as in his classic travelling song, Midnight Bus, and a shimmering version of the old Drifters hit Under The Boardwalk. There was Yankee Lady, but Susie Q as well.

Winchester offered his own seasonal greetings with a lovely solo rendition of God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen and closed his show with a rousing Will The Circle Be Unbroken.

Huston waited years for the right rogues

HOLLYWOOD (UPI) — John Huston is a patient man.

Twenty-five years ago he sought to direct Clark Gable and Humphrey Bogart in Kipling's The Man who Would be King.

But Gable was the property of MGM and Bogart was under bondage to Warner Bros. The twin never met on screen.

Huston bided his time. And now, a quarter century later, he has completed the picture with Sean Connery and Michael Caine.

"Just as well I waited," he said the other day. "The characters are, after all, English. But in the old days people would have accepted Gable and Bogart."

A lusty man whose pictures teem with action and believable characters, Huston's films reflect the man himself.

Now a citizen of Ireland, he rides to the hounds in Galway where he has restored a Georgian mansion. He spends his winters in Mexico where he is building another home.

RASCALS

There is a rascally twinkle in Huston's eye. He has a decided penchant for rogues both on and off the screen. Kipling's pair of soldiers of fortune rank among his favorite scamps.

The same may be said of the characters in his biggest hits, Treasure of Sierra Madre, The African Queen, The Maltese Falcon, Key Largo and The Misfits.

Huston's secret is to imbue his rascals with immediacy in outrageous situations.

JOHN HUSTON
. . . Kipling story

"I try to bring audiences right into the story," he said. "Eugene O'Neill is one of the great influences on my work. When I see his plays I feel as if I'm right on stage with his people.

"I want my pictures to have moments that are so immediate audiences come into a personal experience. In that way people no longer are an audience. They become protagonists. Hemingway did this in literature. He was in the Kipling tradition.

"In order to attain that rare experience, I must bring all my energies to bear on a point in every scene. It becomes a lesson in exactness and explicitness. You make the point so strongly the viewer becomes present."

Huston has suffered from a reputation as an extemporizer. He says it is unjustified.

Legend has it that his black comedy, Beat the Devil, starring Bogart, Peter Lorre and Robert Morley, was contrived a day at a time during production with all principals roaring drunk on location in Italy.

The characters in that film were as unsavory a crew as ever raised hob in the screen.

"It's not true that we made up that film as we went along," he said. "Every line of that picture appeared as it was written in the script.

"I don't extemporize at all. But that is not to say actors don't make important contributions to a movie while it is being made. Caine and Connery demonstrate how much performers bring to a film."

The principal factor of The Man who Would be King, however, is Huston's sorcery in recreating India of the 1880s. One tastes the dust and inhales the fumes of that time and place as the movie unfolds.

SUFFERED

"A well made film transcends intellectuality and truth," he said. "The process of creativity in motion pictures establishes a true medium that the written word cannot attain. It is closer to the thought processes.

"At their very best, pictures are reels behind your eyes and you are projecting them yourself to see what you want to see.

"Three fairly recent films which achieved that for me were McCabe and Mrs. Miller, Midnight Comboy and Bonnie and Clyde. As I watched them I thought I was there, not watching it happen but taking part."

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